Air India Employees Self-contributory Pension Fund

640. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Air India employees self contributory pension fund has been depleted;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any changes were made in the Scheme adverse to the interest of the employees; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. On making periodical review of the fund position, it was observed that till October 2001, the total contribution collected from the employees was Rs. 101.22 crore. Out of this cost of the annuities purchased for 1852 retired/deceased employees was Rs. 61.84 crore and actual contribution made by 1852 retired/deceased employees was 21 crores. Since the benefit extended to the retired employees was disproportionate compared to the contribution made by the individual retired employees, the Board of Trustees after reviewing the fund position of the Trust decided to amend the nature of the scheme from "Benefit Defined" to "Contribution Defined" as the benefits under a Self Contributory Scheme have to be necessarily commensurate with the contributions made by the members. The amendment seeks to correct the disproportionately high pension benefits offered under the original scheme and bring it on par with the level of contribution made by each member. Under the proposed amendment, no member will receive pension in excess of the return on his own contribution. The excess pension already enjoyed by the retired/deceased employees is not sought to be recovered.

Delay in international project near Bangalore

641. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the growth of Karnataka State

has affected very badly due to delay in the implementation of the International Airport Project at Devanahalli, near Bangalore;

(b) when the foundation stone for the proposed project was laid by the Hon'ble Prime Minister;

(c) what are the reasons for delay in granting statutory clearances to the proposed project;

(d) whether Government are aware that the consortium could not go ahead with the proposed project due to delay in giving statutory clearances; and

(e) the steps Government propose to take to give statutory clearances early?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Disinvestment Plans of IA and AI

642. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have finally decided to abandon its disinvestment plans for Indian Airlines and Air India in order to facilitate the acquisition of aircraft for fleet modernisation; and

(b) if so, what are the modernisation plan for the two airlines and time-frame for its implementation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) The matter is under consideration of the Government.

(b) Acquisition of aircraft for Air India and Indian Airlines would be taken up after a decision is taken in the matter of disinvestment.

Expansion of AI network

643. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal for the expansion of Air India network;